

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,

V.

Defendants.

CONSENT DECREE

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I. BACKGROUND

A. The United States of America ("United States"), on behalf of the Administrator of the United States Environmental Protection Agency ("EPA"), filed a complaint in this matter pursuant to Section 107 of the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act of 1980, 42 U.S.C. § 9607, as amended ("CERCLA"), against the City of New Orleans ("City"), Delta By-Products, Inc. ("Delta") and Edward Levy Metals, Inc. ("Levy"), seeking reimbursement of response costs incurred or to be incurred for response actions taken at or in connection with the release or threatened release of hazardous substances at the Agriculture Street Landfill Superfund Site in New Orleans, LA ("the Site").

B. Defendant City filed a third-party complaint against BFI Waste Systems of North America, Inc. ("BFI"), under CERCLA, alleging that BFI is liable in contribution for response costs.

C. Defendants Delta and Levy filed a third-party complaint against BFI, under CERCLA, alleging that BFI is liable in contribution for response costs.

D. BFI is a third-party defendant in actions relating to the Site.

E. In entering into this Consent Decree, BFI ("Settling Defendant") does not admit any liability to Plaintiff or any other party arising out of the transactions or occurrences alleged in the complaint.

F. The United States and Settling Defendant agree, and this Court by entering this Consent Decree finds, that this Consent Decree has been negotiated by the Parties in good faith, that settlement of this matter by the reimbursement of a portion of Plaintiff's costs with respect to the response at the Site will avoid prolonged and complicated litigation between the Parties, and

that this Consent Decree is fair, reasonable, and in the public interest.

THEREFORE, with the consent of the Parties to this Decree, it is ORDERED,
ADJUDGED, AND DECREED:

II. JURISDICTION

1. This Court has jurisdiction over the subject matter of this action pursuant to 28 U.S.C. §§ 1331 and 1345 and 42 U.S.C. §§ 9607 and 9613(b) and also has personal jurisdiction over Settling Defendant. Solely for the purposes of this Consent Decree and the underlying complaint, Settling Defendant waives all objections and defenses that it may have to jurisdiction of the Court or to venue in this District. Settling Defendant shall not challenge the terms of this Consent Decree or this Court's jurisdiction to enter and enforce this Consent Decree.

III. PARTIES BOUND

2. This Consent Decree is binding upon the United States, and upon Settling Defendant and its successors and assigns. Any change in ownership or corporate or other legal status, including but not limited to, any transfer of assets or real or personal property, shall in no way alter the status or responsibilities of Settling Defendant under this Consent Decree.

IV. DEFINITIONS

3. Unless otherwise expressly provided herein, terms used in this Consent Decree that are defined in CERCLA or in regulations promulgated under CERCLA shall have the meanings assigned to them in CERCLA or in such regulations. Whenever terms listed below are used in this Consent Decree, the following definitions shall apply:

a. "CERCLA" shall mean the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act of 1980, as amended, 42 U.S.C. §§ 9601, *et seq.*

b. "Consent Decree" shall mean this Consent Decree.

c. "Day" shall mean a calendar day. In computing any period of time under this Consent Decree, where the last day would fall on a Saturday, Sunday, or federal holiday, the period shall run until the close of business of the next working day.

d. "DOJ" shall mean the United States Department of Justice and any successor departments, agencies or instrumentalities of the United States.

e. "EPA" shall mean the United States Environmental Protection Agency and any successor departments, agencies or instrumentalities of the United States.

f. "EPA Hazardous Substance Superfund" shall mean the Hazardous Substance Superfund established by the Internal Revenue Code, 26 U.S.C. § 9507.

g. "Interest" shall mean interest at the rate specified for interest on investments of the EPA Hazardous Substance Superfund established by 26 U.S.C. § 9507, compounded annually on October 1 of each year, in accordance with 42 U.S.C. § 9607(a). The applicable rate of interest shall be the rate in effect at the time the interest accrues. The rate of interest is subject to change on October 1 of each year.

h. "Paragraph" shall mean a portion of this Consent Decree identified by an Arabic numeral or an upper or lower case letter.

i. "Parties" shall mean the United States and Settling Defendant.

j. "Past Response Costs" shall mean all costs, including, but not limited to direct and indirect costs that EPA or DOJ on behalf of EPA has paid at or in connection with response actions for the Site through the date of lodging of this Consent Decree, plus accrued Interest on all such costs.

k. "Plaintiff" shall mean the United States.

l. "Section" shall mean a portion of this Consent Decree identified by a Roman numeral.

m. "Settling Defendant" shall mean BFI Waste Systems of North America, Inc. ("BFI").

n. "Site" shall mean the Agriculture Street Landfill Site located in Orleans Parish, City of New Orleans. The approximately 95-acre Site is bordered by Higgins Boulevard on the north, the above-grade railroad rights-of-way on the south and west, and the cul-de-sac at the southern end of Clouet Street, near the railroad tracks, to Higgins Boulevard between Press and Montegut streets on the east.

o. "United States" shall mean the United States of America, including its departments, agencies and instrumentalities.

V. PAYMENT OF RESPONSE COSTS

4. Payment of Past Response Costs to EPA. Within 30 days of entry of this Consent Decree, Settling Defendant shall pay to EPA the sum of \$335,000 in reimbursement of Past Response Costs, plus an additional sum for Interest on that amount calculated from the date that the Consent Decree is lodged with the Court. Settling Defendant is jointly and severally obligated for this payment amount.

5. Payment shall be made by FedWire Electronic Funds Transfer ("EFT") to the U.S. Department of Justice account in accordance with EFT instructions provided to Settling Defendant by the Financial Litigation Unit of the U.S. Attorney's Office in the Eastern District of Louisiana following lodging of the Consent Decree.

6. At the time of payment, Settling Defendant shall also send notice that payment has been made to EPA and DOJ in accordance with Section XIII (Notices and Submissions). Such notice shall reference the EPA Region and Site/Spill Identification Number 06D7, DOJ case number 90-11-3-1638/2, and the civil action number.

7. The total amount to be paid pursuant to Paragraph 4 shall be deposited in the EPA Hazardous Substance Superfund.

VI. FAILURE TO COMPLY WITH CONSENT DECREE

8. Interest on Late Payments. If Settling Defendant fails to make any payment under Paragraph 4 (Payment of Response Costs) by the required due date, Interest shall accrue on the unpaid balance through the date of payment.

9. Stipulated Penalty.

a. If any amounts due under Paragraph 4 are not paid by the required date, Settling Defendant shall be in violation of this Consent Decree and shall pay to EPA, as a stipulated penalty, in addition to the Interest required by Paragraph 8, \$1,000 per day that such payment is late.

b. Stipulated penalties are due and payable within 30 days of the date of the demand for payment of the penalties by EPA. All payments to EPA under this Paragraph shall be identified as "stipulated penalties" and shall be made by certified or cashier's check made payable to "EPA Hazardous Substance Superfund." The check, or a letter accompanying the check, shall reference the name and address of the party making payment, the Site name, the EPA Region and Site Spill ID Number 06D7, DOJ Case Number 90-11-3-1638/2, and the civil action number. Settling Defendant shall send the check (and any accompanying letter) to:

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency - Region VI
Attention: Superfund Accounting
P.O. Box 360582M
Pittsburgh, PA 15251

c. At the time of each payment, Settling Defendant shall also send notice that payment has been made to EPA and DOJ in accordance with Section XIII (Notices and Submissions). Such notice shall reference the EPA Region and Site/Spill ID Number 06D7, DOJ Case Number 90-11-3-1638/2, and the civil action number.

d. Penalties shall accrue as provided in this Paragraph regardless of whether EPA has notified Settling Defendant of the violation or made a demand for payment, but need only be paid upon demand. All penalties shall begin to accrue on the day after payment is due and shall continue to accrue through the date of payment. Nothing herein shall prevent the simultaneous accrual of separate penalties for separate violations of this Consent Decree.

10. If the United States brings an action to enforce this Consent Decree, Settling Defendant shall reimburse the United States for all costs of such action, including but not limited to costs of attorney time.

11. Payments made under this Section shall be in addition to any other remedies or sanctions available to Plaintiff by virtue of Settling Defendant's failure to comply with the requirements of this Consent Decree.

12. Notwithstanding any other provision of this Section, the United States may, in its unreviewable discretion, waive payment of any portion of the stipulated penalties that have accrued pursuant to this Consent Decree. Payment of stipulated penalties shall not excuse Settling Defendant from payment as required by Section V or from performance of any other

requirements of this Consent Decree.

VII. COVENANT NOT TO SUE BY PLAINTIFF

13. Covenant Not to Sue Settling Defendant by United States. Except as specifically provided in Section VIII (Reservation of Rights by United States), the United States covenants not to sue or to take administrative action against Settling Defendant pursuant to Section 107(a) of CERCLA, 42 U.S.C. § 9607(a), to recover Past Response Costs. This covenant not to sue shall take effect upon receipt by EPA of all payments required by Section V, Paragraph 4 (Payment of Response Costs) and any amount due under Section VI (Failure to Comply with Consent Decree). This covenant not to sue is conditioned upon the satisfactory performance by Settling Defendant of its obligations under this Consent Decree. This covenant not to sue extends only to Settling Defendant and does not extend to any other person.

VIII. RESERVATIONS OF RIGHTS BY UNITED STATES

14. The United States reserves, and this Consent Decree is without prejudice to, all rights against Settling Defendant with respect to all matters not expressly included within the Covenant Not to Sue by Plaintiff in Paragraph 13. Notwithstanding any other provision of this Consent Decree, the United States reserves all rights against Settling Defendant with respect to:

- a. liability for failure of Settling Defendant to meet a requirement of this Consent Decree;
- b. liability for costs incurred or to be incurred by the United States that are not within the definition of Past Response Costs;
- c. liability for injunctive relief or administrative order enforcement under Section 106 of CERCLA, 42 U.S.C. § 9606;

- d. criminal liability; and
- e. liability for damages for injury to, destruction of, or loss of natural resources, and for the costs of any natural resource damage assessments.

IX. COVENANT NOT TO SUE BY SETTLING DEFENDANT

15. Settling Defendant covenants not to sue and agrees not to assert any claims or causes of action against the United States, or its contractors or employees, with respect to Past Response Costs or this Consent Decree, including but not limited to:
- a. any direct or indirect claim for reimbursement from the Hazardous Substance Superfund based on Sections 106(b)(2), 107, 111, 112, or 113 of CERCLA, 42 U.S.C. §§ 9606(b)(2), 9607, 9611, 9612, or 9613, or any other provision of law;
 - b. any claim arising out of the response actions at the Site for which the Past Response Costs were incurred, including any claim under the United States Constitution, the Tucker Act, 28 U.S.C. § 1491, the Equal Access to Justice Act, 28 U.S.C. § 2412, as amended, or at common law; or
 - c. any claim against the United States, including any department, agency or instrumentality of the United States pursuant to Sections 107 and 113 of CERCLA, 42 U.S.C. §§ 9607 and 9613, relating to Past Response Costs.
16. Nothing in this Consent Decree shall be deemed to constitute approval or preauthorization of a claim within the meaning of Section 111 of CERCLA, 42 U.S.C. § 9611, or 40 C.F.R. 300.700(d).
17. Settling Defendant agrees not to assert any claims for Past Response Costs and to waive and dismiss all claims or causes of action that it may have relating to Past Response Costs,

including for contribution, against any other person. This waiver shall not apply with respect to any defenses, claims or causes of action that Settling Defendant may have against any person if such person asserts a claim or cause of action relating to Past Response Costs against such Settling Defendant and that claim is not otherwise barred by the effect of this settlement.

X. EFFECT OF SETTLEMENT/CONTRIBUTION PROTECTION

18. Except as provided in Paragraph 17, nothing in this Consent Decree shall be construed to create any rights in, or grant any cause of action to, any person not a Party to this Consent Decree. Except as provided in Paragraph 17, the Parties expressly reserve any and all rights (including, but not limited to, any right to contribution), defenses, claims, demands, and causes of action that they may have with respect to any matter, transaction, or occurrence relating in any way to the Site against any person not a Party hereto.

19. The Parties agree, and by entering this Consent Decree this Court finds, that Settling Defendant is entitled, as of the date of entry of this Consent Decree, to protection from contribution actions or claims as provided by Section 113(f)(2) of CERCLA, 42 U.S.C. § 9613(f)(2), for "matters addressed" in this Consent Decree. The "matters addressed" in this Consent Decree are Past Response Costs.

20. In any subsequent administrative or judicial proceeding initiated by the United States for injunctive relief, recovery of response costs, or other relief relating to the Site, Settling Defendant shall not assert, and may not maintain, any defense or claim based upon the statute of limitations, principles of waiver, *res judicata*, collateral estoppel, issue preclusion, claim-splitting, or other defenses based upon any contention that the claims raised by the United States in the subsequent proceeding were or should have been brought in the instant case;

provided, however, that nothing in this Paragraph affects the enforceability of the Covenant Not to Sue by Plaintiff set forth in Section VII.

XI. ACCESS TO INFORMATION

21. Settling Defendant shall provide to EPA, upon request, copies of all records, reports, or information (hereinafter referred to as "records") within its possession or control or that of its contractors or agents relating to activities at the Site, including, but not limited to, correspondence, or other documents or information related to the Site.

22. Confidential Business Information and Privileged Documents.

a. Settling Defendant may assert business confidentiality claims covering part or all of the records submitted to Plaintiff under this Consent Decree to the extent permitted by and in accordance with Section 104(e)(7) of CERCLA, 42 U.S.C. § 9604(e)(7), and 40 C.F.R.

2.203(b). Records determined to be confidential by EPA will be accorded the protection specified in 40 C.F.R. Part 2, Subpart B. If no claim of confidentiality accompanies records when they are submitted to EPA, or if EPA has notified Settling Defendant that the records are not confidential under the standards of Section 104(e)(7) of CERCLA or 40 C.F.R. Part 2 Subpart B, the public may be given access to such records without further notice to Settling Defendant.

b. Settling Defendant may assert that certain records are privileged under the attorney-client privilege or any other privilege recognized by federal law. If Settling Defendant asserts such a privilege in lieu of providing records, it shall provide Plaintiff with the following: 1) the title of the record; 2) the date of the record; 3) the name, title, affiliation (*e.g.*, company or firm), and address of the author of the record; 4) the name and title of each addressee and

recipient; 5) a description of the subject of the record; and 6) the privilege asserted. If a claim of privilege applies only to a portion of a record, the record shall be provided to Plaintiff in redacted form to mask the privileged information only. Settling Defendant shall retain all records that it claims to be privileged until the United States has had a reasonable opportunity to dispute the privilege claim and any such dispute has been resolved in the Settling Defendant's favor.

However, no records created or generated pursuant to the requirements of this or any other settlement with the EPA pertaining to the Site shall be withheld on the grounds that they are privileged.

23. No claim of confidentiality shall be made with respect to any data, including but not limited to any other documents or information evidencing conditions at or around the Site.

XII. RETENTION OF RECORDS

24. Until 10 years after the entry of this Consent Decree, Settling Defendant shall preserve and retain all records now in its possession or control, or which come into its possession or control, that relate in any manner to response actions taken at the Site or the liability of any person under CERCLA with respect to the Site, regardless of any corporate retention policy to the contrary.

25. After the conclusion of the 10-year document retention period in the preceding paragraph, Settling Defendant shall notify EPA and DOJ at least 90 days prior to the destruction of any such records, and, upon request by EPA or DOJ, Settling Defendant shall deliver any such records to EPA. Settling Defendant may assert that certain records are privileged under the attorney-client privilege or any other privilege recognized by federal law. If Settling Defendant asserts such a privilege, it shall provide Plaintiff with the following: 1) the title of the record; 2)

the date of the record; 3) the name, title, affiliation (e.g., company or firm), and address of the author of the record; 4) the name and title of each addressee and recipient; 5) a description of the subject of the record; and 6) the privilege asserted. If a claim of privilege applies only to a portion of a record, the record shall be provided to Plaintiff in redacted form to mask the privileged information only. Settling Defendant shall retain all records that they claim to be privileged until the United States has had a reasonable opportunity to dispute the privilege claim and any such dispute has been resolved in the Settling Defendant's favor. However, no records created or generated pursuant to the requirements of this or any other settlement with the EPA pertaining to the Site shall be withheld on the grounds that they are privileged.

26. Settling Defendant hereby certifies individually that, to the best of its knowledge and belief, after thorough inquiry, it has not altered, mutilated, discarded, destroyed or otherwise disposed of any records, reports, or information relating to its potential liability regarding the Site since notification of potential liability by the United States or the filing of suit against it regarding the Site and that it has fully complied with any and all EPA requests for information pursuant to Sections 104(e) and 122(e) of CERCLA, 42 U.S.C. §§ 9604(e).

XIII. NOTICES AND SUBMISSIONS

27. Whenever, under the terms of this Consent Decree, notice is required to be given or a document is required to be sent by one party to another, it shall be directed to the individuals at the addresses specified below, unless those individuals or their successors give notice of a change to the other Defendants in writing. Written notice as specified herein shall constitute complete satisfaction of any written notice requirement of the Consent Decree with respect to the United States, EPA, DOJ, and Settling Defendant, respectively.

As to the United States:

DOJ:

Chief, Environmental Enforcement Section
Environment and Natural Resources Division
U.S. Department of Justice (DJ # 90-11-3-1638/2)
P.O. Box 7611
Washington, D.C. 20044-7611

EPA:

Joseph E. Compton, III
Assistant Regional Counsel
Office of Regional Counsel
U. S. Environmental Protection Agency Region VI
1445 Ross Avenue
Dallas, TX 75202-2733

Settling Defendant:

Thomas M. Nosewicz, Esq.
Jones, Walker, Waechter, Poitevent, Carrere & Denegre
201 St. Charles Avenue
New Orleans, LA 70170-5100

XIV. RETENTION OF JURISDICTION

28. This Court shall retain jurisdiction over this matter for the purpose of interpreting and enforcing the terms of this Consent Decree.

XV. INTEGRATION

29. This Consent Decree constitutes the final, complete and exclusive agreement and understanding among the Parties with respect to the settlement embodied in this Consent Decree. The Parties acknowledge that there are no representations, agreements or understandings relating to the settlement other than those expressly contained in this Consent Decree.

XVI. LODGING AND OPPORTUNITY FOR PUBLIC COMMENT

30. This Consent Decree shall be lodged with the Court for a period of not less than 30 days for public notice and comment. The United States reserves the right to withdraw or withhold its consent if the comments regarding the Consent Decree disclose facts or considerations which indicate that this Consent Decree is inappropriate, improper, or inadequate. Settling Defendant consents to the entry of this Consent Decree without further notice.

31. If for any reason this Court should decline to approve this Consent Decree in the form presented, this agreement is voidable at the sole discretion of any party and the terms of the agreement may not be used as evidence in any litigation between the Parties.

XVII. SIGNATORIES/SERVICE

32. Each undersigned representative of Settling Defendant to this Consent Decree and the Assistant Attorney General for the Environment and Natural Resources Division of the United States Department of Justice certifies that he or she is authorized to enter into the terms and conditions of this Consent Decree and to execute and bind legally such Party to this document.

33. Settling Defendant hereby agrees not to oppose entry of this Consent Decree by this Court or to challenge any provision of this Consent Decree, unless the United States has notified Settling Defendant in writing that it no longer supports entry of the Consent Decree.

34. Settling Defendant shall identify, on the attached signature page, the name and address of an agent who is authorized to accept service of process by mail on behalf of that Party with respect to all matters arising under or relating to this Consent Decree. Settling Defendant hereby agrees to accept service in that manner and to waive the formal service requirements set

forth in Rule 4 of the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure and any applicable local rules of this Court, including but not limited to, service of a summons.

XVIII. FINAL JUDGMENT

35. Upon approval and entry of this Consent Decree by the Court, this Consent Decree shall constitute the final judgment between and among the United States and the Settling Defendant. The Court finds that there is no just reason for delay and therefore enters this judgment as a final judgment under Fed. R. Civ. P. 54 and 58.

SO ORDERED THIS ____ DAY OF _____, 200__.

United States District Judge

THE UNDERSIGNED PARTIES enter into this Consent Decree in the matter of *United States v. City of New Orleans, et al*, Civil Action No. 02-3618, relating to the Agriculture Street Landfill Superfund Site.

FOR THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

United States Department of Justice

Date:

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EPA

Date:

9/22/05


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U. S. Environmental Protection Agency Region VI

1445 Ross Avenue

Dallas, TX 75202-2733

THE UNDERSIGNED PARTY enter into this Consent Decree in the matter of *United States v. City of New Orleans, et al*, Civil Action No. 02-3618, relating to the Agriculture Street Landfill Superfund Site.

FOR DEFENDANT BFI WASTE
SYSTEMS OF NORTH AMERICA, INC.

Date: August 12, 2005

THOMAS M. NOSEWICZ
Jones, Walker, Waechter, Poitevent,
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201 St. Charles Avenue
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Agent Authorized to Accept Service on Behalf of Above-signed Parties:

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